

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
EB-08 AGRE-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AID-05 /078 W
-----051276 091649Z /47

R 091422Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8357
INFO AMCONSUL IBADAN
AMCONSUL KADUNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 5788

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, NI, PINR
SUBJECT: THE JEMIBEWON PHENOMENON

REF: (A) LAGOS 4784, (B) IBADAN 438, (C) IBADAN 488,
(D) IBADAN 479

1. FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, IT WOULD APPEAR TO US
THE OYO STATE'S PERIPATETIC GOVERNOR, BRIGADIER
DAVID JEMIBEWON, HAD BEEN ENJOYING A PUBLIC RELA-
TIONS FIELD DAY IN THE COURSE OF THE RECENT SUCCESSION
OF CRISES AND CONTROVERSIES.

2. JEMIBEWON'S CENTER STAGE PERFORMANCE BEGAN
WHEN HE PLAYED THE WELL-PUBLICIZED MAIN ROLE IN
BEATING DOWN OPPOSITION AMONG TRADITIONAL RULERS
IN OYO STATE TO THE LAND USE DECREE (REFS A AND B).
HIS "LAND USE" PERFORMANCE CULMINATED LAST WEEKEND
WHEN THE GOVERNORS OF OGUN AND ONDO STATES CAME
TO SEE HIM IN IBADAN TO DISCUSS IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE DECREE.

3. HIS NEXT STARRING ROLE WAS THE DISASTROUS
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IBADAN FLOOD AFTER WHICH JEMIBEWON RECEIVED FRONT-
PAGE COVERAGE OF HIS CONCERN FOR THE VICTIMS,
CULMINATING IN A MUCH PUBLICIZED VIST BY CHIEF
OF STAFF YAR'ADUA TO IBADAN ON APRIL 22. AS THE
APRIL 25 DAILY SKETCH EFFUSED EDITORIALY, "THIS
ACTION AND OTHER ANNOUNCED BY BRIGADIER DAVID
JEMIBEWON, THE OYO STATE MILITARY GOVERNOR,

YESTERDAY POINT TO THE FACT THAT OUR
GOVERNMENT WILL GO ANY LENGTH TO RESCUE AND CARE FOR
ITS CITIZENS ESPECIALLY IN TIMES OF DISASTER."
WE NOTE THAT JEMIBEWON IS STILL RECEIVING
PRESS PLAY ON THE FLOOD, FOR EXAMPLE A PICTURE
IN THE MAY 9 ENUGU-BASED DAILY STAR OF RIVERS
STATE GOVERNOR COL. ZAMANI LEKWOT SYMPATHIZING
WITH THE GOVERNOR OVER THE DISASTER.

4. HOWEVER, JEMIBEWON'S PUBLIC RELATIONS
CAMPAIGN HIT A CRESCENDO DURING THE STUDENT
DISTURBANCES IN IBADAN WHEN STUDENTS ATTACKED
THE GOVERNOR'S RANGE ROVER AND LIVED TO TELL
ABOUT IT (REF C). IN A FRONTPAGE
COMMENT, THE APRIL 28 PUNCH SAID, -THE WHOLE
NATION OWES A DEEP GRATITUDE TO THE OYO STATE
MILITARY GOVERNOR BRIGADIER DAVID JEMIBEWON
THIS MORNING FOR THE GENTLEMANLY AND EXEMPLARY
MANNER (IN WHICH) HE KEPT HIS COOL." THE PUNCH ADDED THAT
GIVEN "THE USUALLY HIGHLY TEMPERAMENTAL BEHAVIOR
OF THE AVERAGE NIGERIAN SOLDIER IN THE FACE OF
VIOLENCE," THIS LOOKED LIKE A RARE CASE OF
"MAN BITE DOG AND DOG NO ANSWER."

5. COMMENT: WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE GOVERNOR
HAS AN EXCELLENT (AND AMERICAN-TRAINED) PUBLIC
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RELATIONS ADVISER. BE THAT AS IT MAY, FROM OUR
VANTAGE POINT IT WOULD APPEAR THAT JEMIBEWON IS
THE ONLY PROMINENT FMG LEADER TO EMERGE FROM
THE RECENT TROUBLES WITH AN ENHANCED IMAGE,
GIVEN HIS AMBITION (REF D), JEMIBEWON MAY BE IN A POSITION
TO MOVE UP IN THE WORLD, IF HIS SELF-PUBLICITY HAS NOT
OFFENDED TOO MANY OF HIS BROTHER OFFICERS.
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